



ST. JOHN'S EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH

8948 N 1900TH AVE, GENESEO IL

815-989-2025

www.stjohnsgeneseo.org

January, 2026

From the Pastor:

“A New Year *In Christ Jesus*”

Let me add my voice to the chorus, “It’s 2026 *already!* Where did 2025 go?” Yes, another year completed and a new year before us. What does 2026 have in store? Will it be the year our Lord returns or when He calls us home? We must be ready, but we do not know. Will it bring joys or sorrows, health or hospitals, triumphs or tragedies? We don’t know that either, though most likely it will contain some of both as most years do. But just not knowing can, of itself, still place the burden of fear upon us, can’t it? This is why it is no small thing to consider that January 1st, New Year’s Day, has its own special celebration according to the church’s sacred calendar, *The Circumcision and Name of Jesus*.

We begin by asking, “Why do we commemorate this festival *on January 1st?*” When God gave circumcision as the sign of His covenant with Abraham, He commanded that all males should be circumcised when eight days old (Genesis 17:12). Six hundred years later this was reiterated/confirmed in the ceremonial law given by God to Israel at Mt. Sinai (Leviticus 12:3). Therefore the answer is simple math: we celebrate Jesus’ birth on December 25th and so we celebrate His circumcision on January 1st, when He is *eight days old*. We also note that, while it was not required under the old covenant, by Jesus’ time it had become common for the child to also be named at the same time he was circumcised.¹

When considering the festival of *The Circumcision and Name of Jesus*, we note a few things of great importance. First, the very fact that Jesus is circumcised proves the miracle of the Incarnation: Christ Jesus, the Son of the Most High, is also *fully human*. And so Jesus, the Son of Man, receives the sign of the covenant, for He is the One who would fulfill, bring, and dispense what the Abrahamic covenant promised (Genesis 12:3; Galatians 3:15-19, 29).

Second, connected to Jesus being the fully human Son of Man, we note that even as an infant, He is fully obedient to God’s Law, being circumcised in accordance with God’s command. Here He was made a member of God’s covenant people and thereby placed under the law, obligated to fulfill it (Galatians 4:4). So this action becomes a part of His *active obedience*, that is, His actively fulfilling the divine Law *in our place*. While it seems so minor at first glance, consider this great truth: If Jesus would have not been circumcised on the eighth day He would have already been outside of God’s Law and, therefore, could not be our Savior! Thus God’s choice of believing and pious Mary and Joseph was absolutely critical, for they would perform everything according to the Law of the Lord (Luke 2:39).

Third, we note that this is the first time our Lord sheds His blood. And so His destiny of atonement is prefigured. And this is made clearer still when He is given the name *Jesus*, which means “the Lord saves.” For He would later have His lifeblood shed by scourge, thorn, nail, and spear, His blood pouring from His crucified body, and by such save us from our sins by paying the penalty they deserve (Matthew 1:21).

So we enter the New Year, but we do so in the light of *The Circumcision and Name of Jesus*. This means remember that *you* have been washed by the blood of Jesus, shed first at His circumcision and in full on Good Friday, and so you have been saved from your sins. And *you* have been covered by His perfect obedience, which already began at His circumcision, which culminated on the cross, so God sees you as His holy child. Therefore, you can be absolutely confident that God is a loving Father to you, and will care for

¹ This is the case with both Jesus and John the Baptist (Cf. Luke 1:59; 2:21).

you once again this New Year. So despite all of the complexities, trials, and fears that it holds, be confident that 2026, because of Jesus, will be *one more year of grace!* Permit me to conclude with a New Year's hymn:

*Now greet the swiftly changing year With joy and penitence sincere.
Rejoice! Rejoice! With thanks embrace Another year of grace.*

*Remember now the Son of God And how He shed His infant blood.
Rejoice! Rejoice! With thanks embrace Another year of grace.*

*This Jesus came to end sin's war; This Name of names for us He bore.
Rejoice! Rejoice! With thanks embrace Another year of grace.*

*His love abundant far exceeds The volume of a whole year's needs.
Rejoice! Rejoice! With thanks embrace Another year of grace.*

*With Him as Lord to lead our way In want and in prosperity,
What need we fear in earth or space In this new year of grace!
(Lutheran Service Book: 896, vv. 1-5)*

A blessed New Year to you **in Christ Jesus!**

Pastor Nerud

Apologetics: The Myth of Abiogenesis²

The origin of life on Earth is one of the most polarizing issues across the history of mankind. From the perspective of conventional science, life emerged by the production of living matter from nonliving matter through a complex, multicomponent process characterized as abiogenesis (a = without, bio = life, genesis = origin).^{1,2} This hypothetical framework implies that inorganic substances were abiotically synthesized into the fundamental organic compounds (amino acids, lipids, nucleotides) ultimately required for the structure and function of living cells.

Historically, notable hypotheses for life's origin include Aristotle's early account of spontaneous generation,³ later refuted by Pasteur and Tyndall;⁴ Darwin's conception that life arose in a warm little pond;⁵ and the primordial soup of warm oceans and hydrothermal vents that Oparin and Haldane proposed.⁵ However, the classical experiment on abiogenesis by Stanley Miller⁶ has received the most attention and is promoted today within college textbooks worldwide.⁷ So what did Miller and others actually find?

The Miller-Urey experiment attempted to reproduce atmospheric conditions on a prebiotic earth (Figure on website).^{6,8} Methane, ammonia, and hydrogen gases (CH₄, NH₃, H₂) were combined in a closed system to simulate a reducing environment (e.g., without oxygen or oxidizing gases). Water vapor was circulated through the gases, exposed to an electric discharge, condensed, and then sampled. The only meaningful organic compounds identified were low yields of glycine and alanine,⁸⁻¹⁰ two of the set of 20 amino acids required for life by all organisms. Soon after, another scientist synthesized adenine (DNA nucleotide) from hydrogen cyanide under conditions also assumed to represent a primitive earth.¹¹

Moreover, researchers promoting origin of life (OoL)^{12,13} and RNA world^{14,15} hypotheses suggest that prebiotic chemistry may have been delivered to Earth by asteroids, meteorites, or comets.^{16,17} But is there any real evidence that ancient, random, naturalistic forces transformed inorganic chemistry into essential organic compounds or the biochemical codes of life on Earth or any other planet? No!

First, Miller-type experiments under reducing⁶ or oxidizing⁸ atmospheres only produce proteinogenic glycine and alanine (racemic), both of which would be reactively hindered by non-proteinogenic amino acids and other substances.^{9,10} Second, the most essential macromolecules of life (proteins, nucleic acids,

² Michael J. Boyle, Ph.D. 2025. [The Myth of Abiogenesis](#). *Acts & Facts*. 54 (5), 6-7. Dr. Boyle is a research scientist at the Institute for Creation Research and earned his Ph.D. in zoology from the University of Hawaii at Manoa.

phospholipids, carbohydrates) only function as polymers and would hydrolyze in the presence of water.¹⁰ Therefore, they are inoperable outside of a cell, the basic functional unit of life.¹⁸ Third, if abiogenesis were operative today, microbes would instantly devour all of the essential organic molecules, as both Darwin and Oparin perceived.^{5,19} Fourth, since abiogenesis is postulated to have occurred on Earth more than 3.5 billion years ago, it is not testable, verifiable, or falsifiable and is therefore outside the purview of science.²⁰

Yet even remote timeframes are no obstacle for an inflexible mind determined to prove that life arose from nonliving molecules. The following quote from Miller and Urey is revealing.

Since the demonstration by Pasteur that life does not arise spontaneously at the present time, the problem of the origin of life has been one of determining how the first forms of life arose, from which all the present species have evolved.⁸

Sound minds would have stopped at Pasteur's refutation of spontaneous generation.⁴ Instead, those intent on a God-free origin of life plunge toward incomprehensible time—the keystone of evolution—while ignoring the true and accurate biblical account of history. Clearly, the elapsed ~6,000-year scriptural record would not only prohibit the inception, diversification, and functionality of abiotic chemical precursors, but it would also rule out the immense time required for their transformation into the essential biochemistry we find today in all cellular life.

Notably, both unicellular and multicellular prokaryotes (bacteria) still inhabit extreme and inhospitable environments today²¹ and most likely function as originally designed. Perhaps cyanobacteria, within which chloroplasts are thought to have first evolved,²¹ are aligned with the biblical timeline as well. Additionally, cyanobacterial origins, along with their presumed role in the initiation of Earth's oxygen-containing atmosphere 2.44–2.22 billion years ago, remain another facet of wishful conjecture.²²

Likewise, warm little ponds, hydrothermal vents, lightning, and primitive atmospheres are merely subjective forgeries to counter what the heavens and Earth clearly reveal: existing abiotic and biotic chemicals do not reflect the ancient precursors of essential macromolecules or living cells that may have arisen from unassisted experiments billions of years ago. Simply put, life cannot create itself.

To completely convince the world of abiogenesis and all that is proposed to arise from it, theorists will need to start from scratch. That is, they will need to get their own stars, their own Earth, and all of the matter, energy, and laws that hold them together and maintain the operation of every elemental product contained within them. Until then, mixing known chemicals, gases, fluids, and electricity found on our planet in order to abiotically synthesize the fundamental organic compounds necessary for existing life is refutable.

What is irrefutable is that existing life has only ever been confirmed to arise from preexisting life. Without human intervention, matter alone cannot create or perform a “Miller” experiment or ever account for the supremely intelligent mind behind the Quaternary Triplet Code of DNA.²³ In fact, the massless information intrinsic to every form of biological life “has never been observed to arise from purely physical or chemical processes.”²³

These facts are established, but to a reprobate mind the alternative is unacceptable: “For in six days the Lord made the heavens and the earth, the sea, and all that is in them, and rested the seventh day” ([Exodus 20:11](#)). Any other view belongs exclusively within the purview of mythology, as exemplified here by the myth of abiogenesis.

References

1. Lawrence, E., ed. 2011. *Henderson's Dictionary of Biology*, 15th ed. San Francisco, CA: Benjamin Cummings.
2. Borror, D. J. 1960. *Dictionary of Word Roots and Combining Forms*. Mountain View, CA: Mayfield Publishing Co.
3. Cresswell, R., trans. 1887. *Aristotle's History of Animals*. London, UK: George Bell & Sons.
4. Conant, J. B. 1953. *Pasteur's and Tyndall's Study of Spontaneous Generation*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
5. Schopf, J. W. 2024. [Pioneers of Origin of Life Studies—Darwin, Oparin, Haldane, Miller, Oró—and the Oldest Known Records of Life](#). *Life*. 14 (10): 1345.
6. Miller, S. L. 1953. [A Production of Amino Acids under Possible Primitive Earth Conditions](#). *Science*. 117 (3046): 528–529.
7. Urry, L. A. et al. 2017. *Campbell Biology*, 11th ed. London, UK: Pearson Education, Inc.

Why we do what we do in worship³

Notes on the Liturgy #9 — Readings

The first liturgy note referred to the term that we use for the worship service of Word and Sacrament, “Divine Service.” The idea behind “Divine Service” is that in worship, first and foremost God comes *to serve us* (cf. Mark 10:45). So now, in the Scripture readings, God serves us, feeding our hungry souls with the pure spiritual milk of His Word (1 Peter 2:2).

The Readings are another *proper* of the day, which means that they change from Sunday to Sunday.⁴ A lectionary is a book of appointed readings, known as pericopes.⁵ The intention of having assigned readings is *not* that people don’t hear the whole Bible. On the contrary, “An obvious need for an organized series of lessons grew from the Church’s emphasis on the Bible and the desire to recall the events of Christ’s life.”⁶ Christians should be supplementing the Scripture readings in worship with their own Bible reading, guaranteeing that they will still hear those readings that do not come up in the lectionary.

You will note that often the Old Testament reading normally corresponds to the Gospel reading in its content by way of prophecies or types. This reminds us that Christianity is not a novel faith but rather is rooted in the ancient promises of God recorded in the Old Testament. Jesus is thoroughly Jewish in his human family of origin. He has come in fulfillment of Old Testament prophecy. With that, we gain a great understanding that the Christian Church (both Jews and Gentiles) is the fulfillment of ancient Israel. During some parts of the Church Year, especially the Easter season, the Old Testament reading is replaced by the First reading. For example, in the Easter season readings from the book of Acts, the “new” history of the Christian Church, replace the OT reading. The Epistle normally follows a continuous or semi-continuous reading over a series of Sundays, allowing for most, if not all, of it to be heard in worship. The Gospel reading for each year normally comes from a specific Evangelist, Series A, Matthew; B, Mark; C, Luke. John is then used in all three years of the lectionary.

It should be noted that the Gospel reading is treated with a special reverence. The congregation stands for this reading, and in some congregations a special procession to the middle of the church may be included. This is in no way to denigrate the rest of Scripture, or to say that the Gospel is “more God’s Word” than other parts. However, the Gospels are a record of the very words and deeds of Christ, the fulfillment of the Old Testament and the foundation for the rest of New. Truly the whole Bible centers around who Jesus is and what He has done for us, as He Himself claimed (John 5:39). Therefore, reverent traditions serve as visual reminders that the Gospel records are the center of the Scriptures and that, while we are rightly Word-centered, the Word itself is *Christ-centered*.

On a related aside, as we recognize that God’s Word is what we need for the health and welfare of our Christian faith and life, we rightly note that in the Divine Service we hear the Word in many more places than just the Readings. *Lutheran Service Book* does a fantastic job referencing the Bible passages that the liturgy is drawn from, most often using direct quotes from the Bible. So while it should be obvious that God is speaking to us in the Readings, *the whole liturgy* has already been informed by, and thus *formed* by, the Word of God. He speaks to us, blessing us, and we speak back to Him what He has first spoken to us, glorifying Him with words from His Word, since our words would all too often fall far short.

³ These notes were originally written in 2001 by Pastor David Oberdieck and have been edited both on the site listed and furthermore by Pastor Nerud, who also added quite a bit of new information. The entire series of articles may be found at <http://steadfastlutherans.org/liturgy>.

⁴ A pastor may choose from a one-year series of readings that repeat each year or a three-year cycle. The readings for both cycles follow the church year calendar—Advent, Christmas, Epiphany, Lent, Easter, Pentecost. Here at St. John’s, we currently are following the three-year series and my comments in this article reflect that.

⁵ *Pericope* is Greek for “section or selection.”

⁶ *Gathered Guests: A Guide to Worship in the Lutheran Church*; Timothy H. Maschke; CPH, 2009, p. 449.

THANK YOU!

My family and I wish to thank all of you for the cards, gifts, prayers, support and love that you have once again extended to us this Christmas season and throughout the last year. They are very appreciated as are each of you. We are again humbled by God's grace expressed through you and rejoice at our being here with you. God richly bless your New Year, especially in faith, hope, and love, all for the sake of His Son, our Savior, Jesus!

Pastor, Heidi, Sarah, Nicole and Katrina

OFFICE INFORMATIONS



Please call the office or Pastor when someone is ill, hospitalized, or homebound or you desire private communion.

- Please use this email to contact the office: churchoffice@stjohnsgeneseo.org
- Website address – www.stjohnsgeneseo.org
- Facebook page: <https://www.facebook.com/St.Johns.Geneseo/>
- All Sunday services are 'Live' streamed at 10am and posted to our website

A DOLLAR FOR MISSIONS

Immanuel Lutheran Student Center in Macomb was dedicated in 1969, but some of the equipment in the kitchen of the apartment for the live-in student who takes care of the student center (the sexton) has not been replaced since then. DFM funds would be used to replace the original kitchen equipment.

Amount to be funded: \$11,000

Project: Replace original kitchen equipment in the sexton's apartment at Immanuel Lutheran Student Center, Macomb



MITE BITES

LWML CID Mission Grant #5 – Just for Moms - \$3,544

Almost 4 out of 10 women who receive services from Pregnancy Resources in Moline, IL have no faith background or are of non-Christian faith. Along with this, of professing Christian clients, 48 are at risk for abortion.

Pregnancy Resources "Just for Moms" bags help provide a new mom with a holistic wellness approach that considers a person's physical, mental, emotional, social, and spiritual aspects. Each bag offers a Lutherans for Life devotional for mothers, a journal to track emotional needs, post-natal vitamins, and more help to prepare her for the birth and delivery of her baby.

How can I help? Pray that God uses the materials distributed by Pregnancy Resources to bring lost souls to Christ. Support this grant by donating to your church's LWML group mite fund.

PRAYER GROUP (CHAIN)

All are invited to participate either by becoming an email prayer warrior or asking for prayers. Prayer warriors receive requested prayers from the Pastor via email which then can be used as they pray throughout the day. Those desiring prayers can make a request to the Pastor. This is a blessing to those requesting prayers and those praying for our brothers/sisters in need of prayers.



PRAYER REQUESTS

Our Infrequent Attendees – pray the Holy Spirit bring them to understand their need to be in regular worship in church and we as brothers and sisters in Christ would reach out to them.

Our LWML Chapter – that God would continue to bless their work.

Sunday school – pray the Holy Spirit would direct and guide the students to a better understanding of God's love and mercy in Jesus Christ and that all parents would be diligent in bringing their children each Sunday.

Youth – pray the Holy Spirit would provide the means to work with our youth to keep them faithful to their confirmation promises. Bless and increase their numbers.

Elderly/Homebound - pray that this congregation would continually remember our Elderly and Shut-ins and minister to their special needs.

Confirmation Students – pray that they will be eager to study, learn and grow in the teachings of the Lutheran church and their faith. May they see this is the beginning of a life lived for Jesus.



REMEMBERING THOSE IN NEED!

ST. JOHN'S FAMILY—O Lord, You are the great Physician of soul and body. We pray that You would show mercy these members of St. John's:

Linda Aper

Paula Chapa

Joyce DeFauw

Betty Firch

Marcia Helke

Jessica Johnson

Lynne Johnson

Rosalie Jorgensen

Linda Lundquist

Mary Jayne Nash

Aaron Raschke

Drew Schillinger

Dave Schmidt

Carolyn Werner

Carolyn Wildermuth

Denise Winchell

Marilyn Woods

Jon/Anita Clausing (missionaries in Kenya)

Paul Werner (brother of Dan Werner)

Loyall Talarico (niece of Mary Jo Gehn)

Ellen Bauer (grandmother of Joel Werling)

Ann Behrendt (daughter of Carolyn Wildermuth)

Marty Cavato (cousin of Mary Jo Gehn)

Jodi Martins (daughter of Gary/Darla Johns)

Justin Rittenhouse (grandson of John/Nancy Wickwire)

Joline Parrish (sister of Gayla Kroll)

Please remember to call the church office if you are needing prayer. Also let us know when we can remove your name because your health has improved and you are living a regular life. We love to give thanks to God for His healing just as we send Him our requests.)

MILITARY – We pray for those serving in our military and their families:

Luke Thompson (son of John/Kindra Thompson)

Karl Flynn (son of Mr/Mrs Paul Flynn)

Casey Powers Jr. (step son of Lisa Powers)

Brittany Lenni (daughter of Gabe Loenser)

Rylie Hallendorff (grand-daughter of Carolyn & Dan Werner)

JANUARY BAPTISMS

1 Nathaniel Helg

3 Kenneth Allison

6 Kate Rocheford

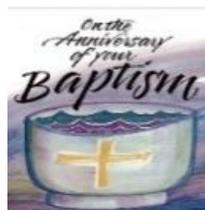
9 Alan Magerkurth

11 Laney Esterlein

13 Alicia Hock

13 Wayne Winchell

14 Larry Kane



16 Jack Magerkurth

19 Heidi McKibbon

20 Carolyn Wildermuth

26 Alex Miller

26 Lucas Thompson

30 Haillie Scharpman

31 Suzanne Blank

JANUARY BIRTHDAYS

3 Alicia Hock
4 Addison Jorgensen
4 Avery Magerkurth
4 Bridgette Smith
5 Tricia Anderson
5 Emily Marckese
6 Larry Hock
7 Makeena Wickwire
11 Kelly Helge

11 Kyra Nash
12 Mary Jayne Nash
18 Teresa Hock
21 Aaron Raschke
21 Kira Roberts
23 Justine Mitchell
25 Sara Yerkey
28 Laura Anderson
28 Rylan Mitchell

29 Logan Raschke



JANUARY ANNIVERSARIES

5 Drew/Cathy Schillinger (2003) - 23 yrs
14 Richard/Mandolyn Davila (2006) - 20 yrs
14 Lucas/Nicole Thompson (2010) – 16 yrs
25 Alan/Christy Magerkurth (2003) –
23 yrs 27 Thad/Kathy Curry (1990) – 36 yrs



NEWS YOU CAN USE!

A Joy-Filled Christmas

“I bring you good news of great joy that will be for all the people.” Luke 2:10

The song “We Wish You A Merry Christmas” expresses the merry sentiment we all want at Christmas time. Though we may not always feel merry with COVID continuing to impact our lives with losses, social distancing, and restrictions on gatherings. Yet, even if our Christmas isn’t merry, it can be joy-filled.

Consider the stress and difficulties Mary and Joseph endured. Her pregnancy undoubtedly evoked rumors and accusations from many people. They had to travel over 70 miles to Bethlehem where they had no place to stay except a stable. Yet, they had the joy of knowing God was with them and would take care of them and the baby.

God never promised us continual happiness and glee. But he does promise to give us joy in all circumstances. **“Rejoice in the Lord always...the Lord is at hand.”** Phil.4:4 I once knew a nursing home resident who defined joy in the Lord as being glad that God is close by. When we feel sad, we should not force ourselves to look happy for the sake of others. Instead, be honest about our feelings, and remind each other that God is near us during our sad times too.

Focus on the reason for the season: Jesus. It is not about food, gifts, candies and cookies. We celebrate that Immanuel has come to us and remains with us always. Verse three of the song “Silent Night” describes our Savior as **LOVE’S PURE LIGHT**. John 1:9 tells us **The true light that gives light to every man was coming into the world**. The light of our Savior’s loving presence chases away darkness and fills us with joy in the Lord. We don’t have to stress about making Christmas merry. Instead, we can have a joy-filled Christmas as Jesus shines his love in us and through us!

Chaplain Jeffrey Harter

Pray For Our Central Illinois District Missions, supported by your church's Mission Dollars to the District.

We give thanks for the gift of our Savior's birth, and we pray for the adherents of various world religions who do not believe that in Jesus Christ the Word became flesh for the salvation of all people. We ask the Lord to shine His saving Gospel light to everyone, and to do so through us. "Thy kingdom come"!

Call the Central Illinois Church Extension Fund for their latest Investment Rate

Items of Interest to Share

The Small Church Summit for Winter, 2026, will feature a presentation by SID President Heath Curtis titled "The Small Town Lutheran Church." Sectionals will be on "Shepherding our Strays," technology in small churches, and safety standards. Saturdays in two locations:

- Hope Lutheran Church, Highland – on Jan. 10 or (if weather is bad then) Jan. 31
- **St. Paul Lutheran Church, Lexington – on Feb.21 or (if weather is bad then) Feb. 28**

Sign-in will be at 9:30 a.m., opening devotion will commence at 10:00, and closing prayer will be at 2:30 p.m.

Register by January 3, 2026 at <https://forms.gle/eujwE5hmRC48wF7MA>

If you think your church is small, YOU are invited. And everyone is welcome!

CID BOARD OF DIRECTORS REVIEW REPORT 11/25/25

Mr. Scott Breitenfeld (University Lutheran – Champaign) was appointed as lay member to the Board of Directors. Other appointments of lay members were made to fill district commissions. The Evangelism Commission is in need of members for their commission. If interested in serving on the Evangelism Commission, please contact Pastor Ken Schurb. The Formula of Concord study continued on Article I: Original Sin. The 2026 CID Budget was adopted. CID Staff Housing Allowances were approved for 2026. The 2026 Dollars for Missions projects were approved. They are: Travel expense for Hispanic Ministry at Beardstown and Signage for Wittenberg Campus Ministry in Normal.

Pastor Chuck Olander was thanked for his years of service as Gift Planning Officer for CID.

Current Dollar For Mission Project

Project: Replace original kitchen equipment in the sexton's apartment at Immanuel Lutheran Student Center, Macomb Immanuel Lutheran Student Center in Macomb was dedicated in 1969, but some kitchen equipment in the apartment for the live-in student who takes care of the student center (the sexton) has not been replaced since then. DFM funds would be used to replace the original kitchen equipment. **Amount to be funded:** \$11,000.00

2026 Youth Bible Bowl

Date: Will be in the spring of 2026. We are still working on the date.

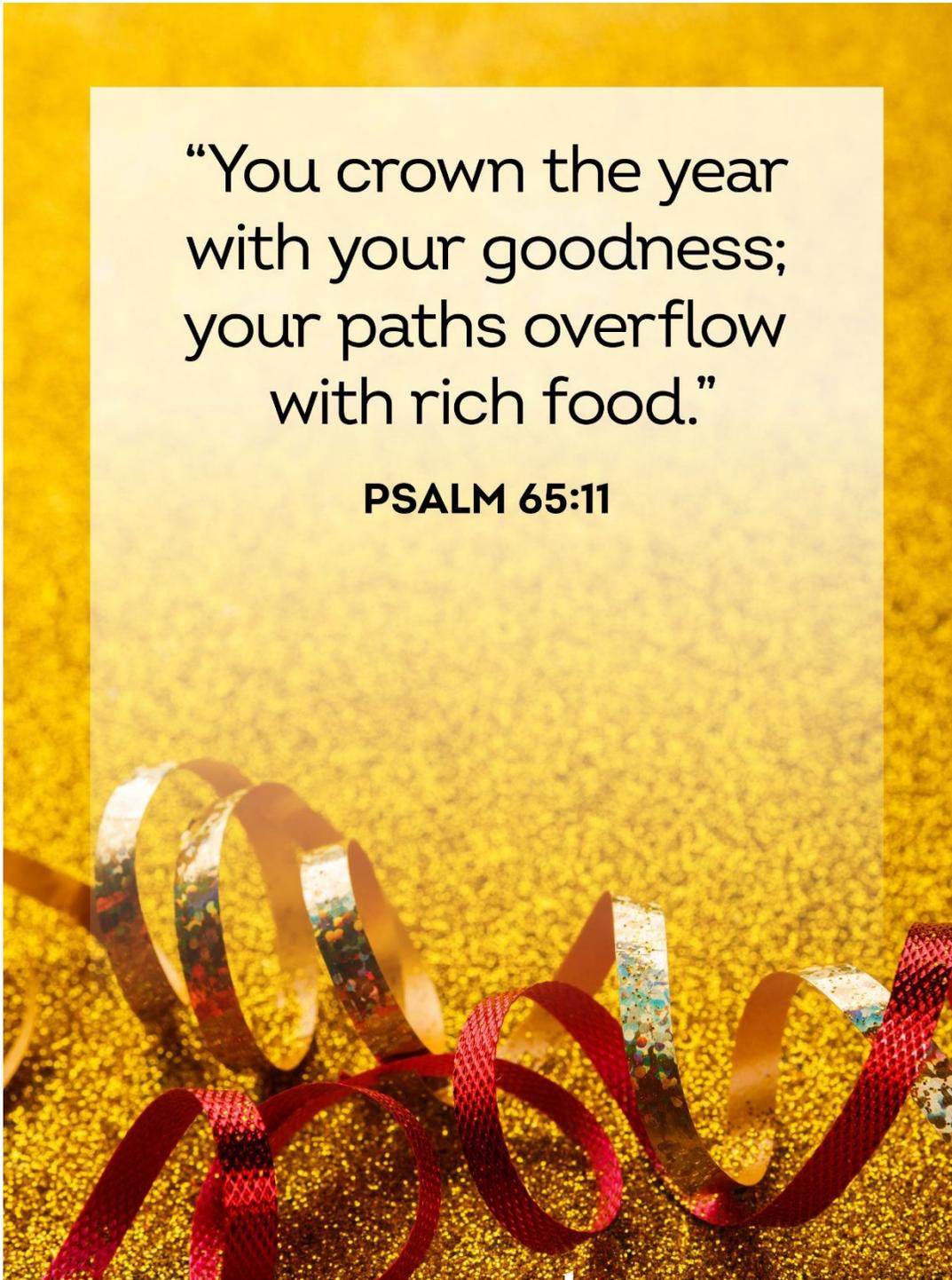
Topic: "The Gospel According to St. Matthew"

The Gospel according to St. Matthew summarizes what we need to know to receive salvation from sin, the devil, and death. St. Matthew's Gospel records the most important teachings of Jesus and the key events in Jesus' life. Plan to study "the Gospel according to St. Matthew" with youth (junior and senior high [grades 6-12]) as thoroughly as you can, to prepare them to answer questions in your Circuit and at the District Bible Bowl in the spring, and (most importantly) so that by God's grace and the power of the Holy Spirit they grow in their faith that Jesus truly is the Son of God and our Savior.

Contact Rev Mark Eddy (zionlcms@juno.com) for additional information.

“You crown the year
with your goodness;
your paths overflow
with rich food.”

PSALM 65:11



A Joyous New Year to you!



VICAR STEPHEN

There is therefore now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus. For the law of the Spirit of life has set you free in Christ Jesus from the law of sin and death.

Romans 8:1-2

DECEMBER 2025

301 Bates Ave SE
Winter Haven, FL 33880

WELCOME TO

Moore Monthly

Happy Thanksgiving!

I've said it before, but I'll say it again. I really love Grace! I am very blessed to be here and am learning so much. I am learning a lot from Pastor Reich, who is challenging me to push the boundaries of my comfort zone. I can see a lot of growth in myself as I look back over the last 5 months! I am, however, also learning so much from our associate pastor, Steve Braun, and from our Director of Youth and Family Ministry, Casey Billman. In some ways I'm learning as much from them as I am from Pastor Reich! I've really enjoyed leading Middle School Youth. It has been a highlight of my time here! Teaching confirmation at the school makes for long Tuesdays, but it is so rewarding! Along with this, Our Middle School Dean, Jake McGee, came to me and asked if I wanted to come as a chaperone on the 8th grade Washington, DC trip. I, of course, said yes and am so excited!

On the church side, I continue to preach, teach, plan, and make visits! Pastor Reich is challenging me to expand my preaching style, which is both challenging but beneficial! In addition, I planned our Thanksgiving Eve service and am in the process of finishing our Christmas Day service. I've really enjoyed planning these services and letting my creativity flow as I gain good, practical experience!

Blessings as we start this Advent season and celebrate the coming of our Savior!





ST. JOHN'S LUTHERAN CHURCH
 GENESEO IL
 815-989-2025

January 2026

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
				1 OFFICE CLOSED	2	3
4 SS/Adult/Youth Bible Study 8:45am Worship/Comm 10 am	5 <i>Pastor's Day Off</i>	6	7	8 Council meeting 6:30	9	10 Take down decorations 9 am
11 SS/Adult/Youth Bible Study 8:45am Worship 10 am	12 <i>Pastor's Day Off</i>	13	14	15 Men's Bible Study 6:30 pm	16	17
18 SS/Adult/Youth Bible Study 8:45am Worship/Comm 10 am Youth 11:30 am	19 OFFICE CLOSED <i>Pastor's Day Off</i>	20 SS Teachers 6:30 pm	21	22	23	24
25 SS/Adult/Youth Bible Study 8:45am Worship 10 am Voters' Assembly 11am	26 <i>Pastor's Day Off</i>	27	28	29	30	31



ST. JOHN'S EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH
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BUILT ON CHRIST OUR CORNERSTONE

Pastor: Rev. Timothy Nerud

pastor@stjohnsgeneseo.org

churchoffice@stjohnsgeneseo.org

Sunday school/Adult & Youth Bible Class - 8:45am

Worship Services - 10 am

(Holy Communion 1st, 3rd, & 5th Sundays)

Live Streaming each week on Facebook

